



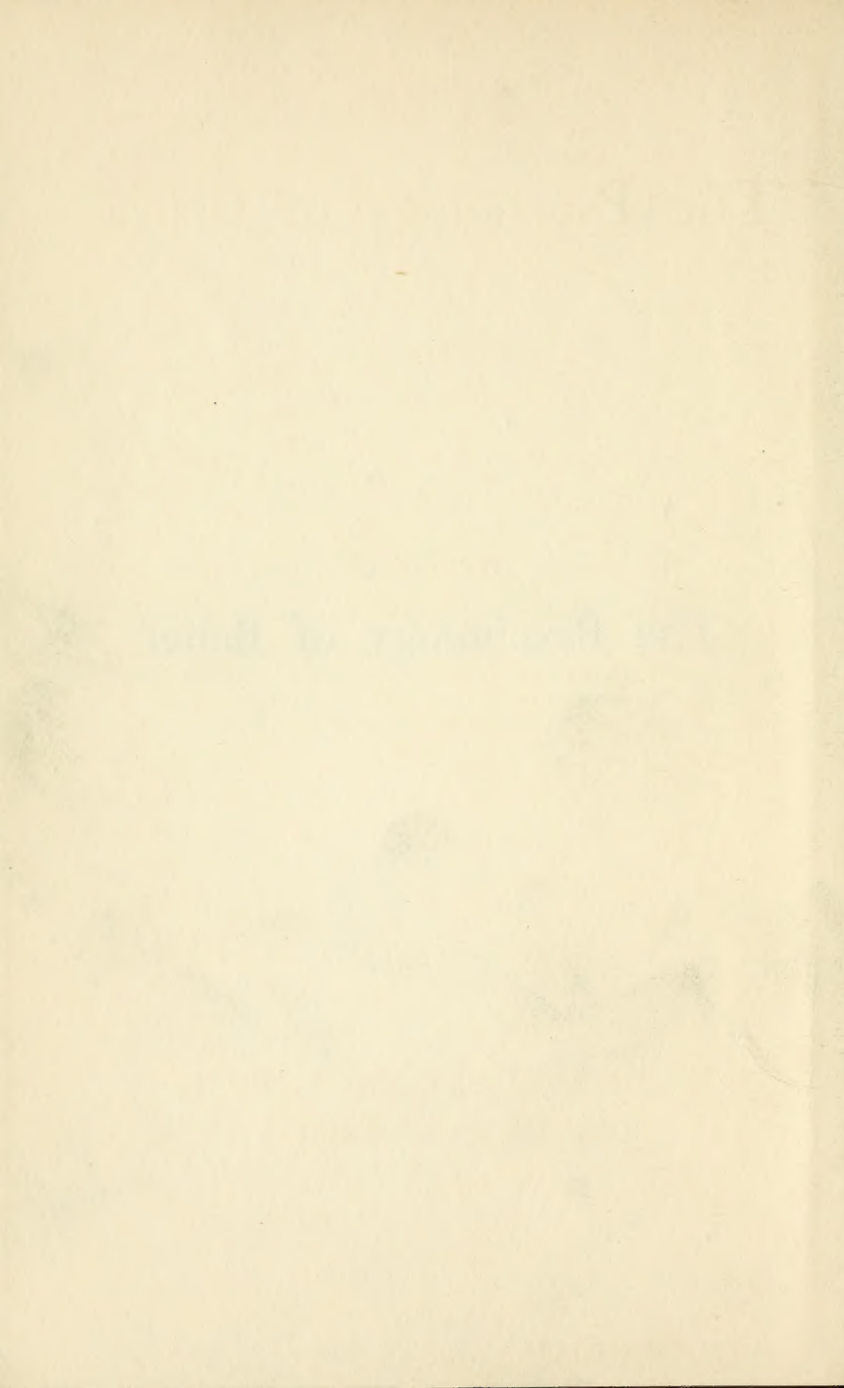






# The Psychology of Belief





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# The Psychology of Belief

BY

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THIS small work owes its existence to no more extraneous reason than my own interest in the large and important subject of which it treats—an interest ante-dating by many years the more general interest that has recently sprung up in psychological matters of the kind. There are those, to whose wants the present treatment, single Essay as it is, will have relevance, and to them I address myself.

J. L.

ANNICK LODGE, IRVINE.



# CONTENTS.

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PAGE

Ancient aspects of the problem of Belief—Views of the Gnostics, of Augustine, Clement, and Origen, as to its psychology—Arnauld and Descartes—Abelard, Aquinas, and Anselm—Descartes and methodical doubt—Importance of the issues for the psychology of belief—Faith and knowledge—Knowledge and certainty—Confused issues as to cognition—Real cognition and certitude—Faith, in its theological and its philosophical usages, distinguished—Reality—feeling as mental—Feeling and cognition—Dissent from Sir Wm. Hamilton—Nature and function of belief—Locke, Leibniz, Jacobi, &c.—Hume's meritorious treatment of the problem of belief—Spinoza's view—Hume's distinction of conception and belief—Criticism of Hume's psychology—Views of Reid and Brown—Practical implications of Hume's doctrine—Kant's view of belief—Its relations to knowledge—Criticism of Kant—Fichte's view of belief or faith—His treatment of knowledge and will—The psychology of Fries—His admonition to Kant—His use of anthropologic concepts—His fundamental judgments—Views of Mansel and Hamilton—The logical and metaphysical treatments of Hamilton not harmonised—Ferrier's view of belief—Views of Brentano—His psychology of judgment—His standpoint empiric—Bain's rejection of James Mill's associational views—Bain's own psychology of belief—Criticism of Bain's positions—John Stuart Mill's psychology of belief—Criticism of Mill's theory—Herbart and Beneke—Beneke's opposition to Apriorism—His relation to Fries—His views of judgment and knowledge—Spencer's treatment of belief—Criticism of Spencer—Criticism of Fechner's views



of belief—Belief in Sully's psychology—M'Cosh and Calderwood—Baldwin's psychology—Intellectualist theory—Unique character of belief—Ladd and Ormond—Belief in Stout's psychology—Discussion of doubt and disbelief—The doubt of Descartes—Judgment in the view of Lipps—His pure psychology—Ribot's division of psychological theories—Criticism of his position—Dewey's psychology of belief—His view of reality in relation to belief—Julius Schultz on the psychology of axioms—And on the psychological origin of life—Comparison with Royce and James—James on the psychology of belief—His view of the opposites of belief—Rosmini's views—Criticism of James—The theory of Aquinas—James' "passional" decision—His unsatisfactory identification of cognition with will—Merits of his work—Paulsen's psychology of belief—Criticism of his views—Resemblances between James and Paulsen—Royce's theory of belief—Criticism of his positions—Bowne and Balfour—Sigwart on Mill—Sigwart's views of judgment—His defects—Lotze on the feeling in reason—Lotze's treatment of belief criticised—His view of immediate certainty—Windelband's views of judgment—His position contrasted with Sigwart's—His treatment of the problematic judgment—Bonatelli's psychology—Wundt's psychological view—His treatment of will as the psychical reality of the individual—His theory of faith or belief—Heymans on the psychology of knowledge—His view of judgment—Rickert's psychology of knowledge—Contrasted with James and Paulsen—Rickert's insistence on need for faith in the objectivity of the moral order—The judging activity in Rickert's view—His emphasis on the value of truth or sense of obligation—Criticism of Rickert's positions—Results of critical-historical survey—Best psychological view of belief—Valuation of feeling—Genesis of belief—Gain of modern psychology—Belief and truth—Belief and things—Complexity of belief in its relatedness—Coercive character of belief—Manifoldness of grounds of belief—Belief in the physical sphere—Belief in the sphere of human life—Belief as a primary psychical experience—Belief and transcendental reality—Belief and voluntary control—Basal character of belief—Dr E. Caird on faith and reason—Criticism of Dr Caird's treatment—True view of their relations—Error of the Pragmatist emphasis on interest—Psychology and the validity

of beliefs—Our fundamental beliefs—Their vast range and enormous power—Functions of thought and science—Belief as rooted in human nature—Its world-relations and time-relations—Relations of judgment and apprehension—Nature of judgment—Apprehension and belief—Belief and objective reality—Nature of belief—Mistaken views of relations of belief and knowledge—Limits of cognition—Belief as involuntary—Psychology of power—Belief and purposive activity—Practical efficiency of belief—Failure of psychologists to do the principle justice—Belief and life—Belief and ideals—Belief and teleological activity—Belief as peerless incentive and support to man's systematising needs 1

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE . . . . . 68

INDEX . . . . . 69



## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BELIEF.

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THE problem of belief is no new one. Not to speak of Gnostic attempts at unification of *πίστις* and *γνώσις*—faith and knowledge—we have the early weighing of the faith problem upon the spirits of Augustine, Clement, and Origen. In the case of Augustine, the naturalness and necessity of faith or belief to man's common life loomed out largely before him, making the applicability of the principle of belief or faith in higher spheres appear more natural to him. Reason is to him no antagonist to such faith. Reason may have primacy in rank, thinks Augustine, but for faith he claims priority in time. At any rate, there is no doubt that Augustine did psychologically better than many thinkers of late times, for he expressly maintained that, while there are senses in which faith must precede reason, there are equally senses in which

reason is anterior to faith. To him, reason is never lacking to faith, for it is the function of reason to say to whom or to what belief shall be given. We believe that we may know, for such faith is, for him, the starting-point of knowledge. Even so late as Arnauld, we find these positions of Augustine urged against the clear and distinct belief advocated by Descartes. This latter, Arnauld thought good enough in matters of science and intelligence, but not in matters of faith, where, with Augustine, we must believe what we do not know. In Clement and Origen, faith is a free appropriation of the truth, an acquiescence of the soul in reason which is itself reasonable. Clement, in his contentions with the Gnostics, insists on faith as a voluntary assent, and as the foundation on which is built the superstructure of knowledge. Origen, in holding faith freely to receive the truth, maintained its co-operation with reason in the attainment of knowledge. For only by rational belief was the transcendent object of knowledge known.

The problem of belief notably figures, again, in the contention of Abelard, with his *intellige ut credas*; in the position of Aquinas, with his intelligence seeking faith (*intellectus quærens fidem*), and in that of Anselm, with his *crede ut intelligas*. But, waiving Mediæval



discussions, and passing to the beginnings of Modern Philosophy, we have provisional and methodical doubt propounded, as a rule in philosophical method, by Descartes. But some degree of belief exists in doubt, which latter diminishes as knowledge grows. Belief is excluded by knowledge, but disbelief, if absolute, implies a high degree of knowledge, even the knowledge that a thing is not true. Enough has been said to show what an interesting and important issue, for the psychology of belief, arises out of the contentions of Augustine and Origen, of Aquinas and Anselm and Abelard, the issue, namely, whether belief, psychologically considered, precedes knowledge, or follows it. The contention that all knowledge is, in the last result, conditioned by faith, or rests upon belief, is one which commands much of our sympathy, and has found favour both with philosophers and theologians of repute; nevertheless, we cannot give to it our psychological support. Knowledge, in our view, is primary, and, from this root, rises an outgrowth of beliefs of lovely form and living power. Knowledge—thought—there must be, before belief; pre-supposition and concomitant of my every belief is the knowledge that the object exists, or how shall I believe in it? Belief thus springs

from knowledge or cognition. I say "cognition" significantly, because there has been almost hopeless confusion in this connection from a false and misleading conception of knowledge. Knowledge, that is to say, is often spoken of as if by it were meant certainty. But if the certainty signified be a feeling of certainty in the mind, then we know that that exists often enough where the matter or ground of the belief is really false. The knowledge was not actual certainty—not real knowledge—at all, but merely a confident, though mistaken, belief. If certainty is to be spoken of at all, it should be the certainty of real cognition, standing in direct relation to the object so as to apprehend its reality, and not simply the loosely called certainty of a knowledge which rests upon mere adduced grounds for believing. In such real cognition there is certainty, but it is the double certainty of fact as well as feeling. There is, no doubt, a certainty of feeling appropriate to certain beliefs, but it is a certainty of belief, and not of knowledge. For primary cognition must not be reduced to mere belief, with which it stands, as matter of fact, in psychological contrast. Knowledge, properly so called, is not only antecedent, but also ground, of belief, which latter bases itself

upon what appears to it true in mediate or inferential ways. It should be now apparent that, though the highest certainty may be ours in the sphere of the highest or most spiritual things, it must be the certainty of belief, not of what is strictly called cognition. Much confusion, it may here be noted, has arisen from the use of belief and faith interchangeably, as if they were synonymous terms. They are so in philosophical usage, but the term faith has, in theological science, a technical use or sense, very different in its voluntary and affectional concomitants from belief, in the sphere of purely mental science. In matters of purely rational belief, we set out from a state of uncertainty or, it may be, doubt, and belief is the result of proof—an intellectual assent based on adequate grounds or sufficient evidence. Such an attitude of assent to the truth of the evidence or the reality of the object, is what we designate belief. The belief arises out of the feeling background of our instinctive nature or life. But, as modern psychology has shown, all such feeling is mental, and carries in it cognitive elements. Feeling, in its idealising power, leads us beyond the horizon and limits of cognition, but, the higher our states of belief become, the more must they be grounded in thought or

reason, and the less in mere feeling. For reason is, in our view, the ultimate ground of belief, contrary to Hamilton and others, who take belief to be "the primary condition of reason."

Returning to our critical survey, we remark that the nature and function of belief were dealt with by Locke, Leibniz, Jacobi, and other philosophers whose names we have given in an appended Bibliography, but the real merit of raising belief to a problem belongs to Hume, who brought out its unique character as a mental attitude. This he did by differentiating belief from mere conception, because, as he said, we conceive many things which we do not believe. Belief is to be taken as consciousness of reality or truth. The whole nature of belief consists, for Hume, in this reality-feeling, as something which depends neither on fancy nor on will. It is interesting to note the difference between Hume's treatment of belief and that of Spinoza, who, in his 'Short Treatise,' made belief consist in a conviction from reason—or being convinced in one's understanding from powerful evidence supplied by reason. This does not bring about any real union with the thing believed, that being reserved by Spinoza for "clear cognition," which consists

in a direct union with the thing itself. "True belief is good only because it is the way to true cognition." Hume's reality-consciousness has, however, been very diversely viewed, as to its nature, by psychologists since Hume, in their treatment of belief as kernel of cognition. It is the lasting merit of Hume, to have set out the essential points in the problem of belief, as modern psychology is concerned with it. Hume, as we know, ascribed to ideas greater force, weight, influence, firmness, stability, in virtue of belief. It is belief which, for Hume, distinguishes the ideas of the judgment from the fictions of the imagination. Such relations, for example, as causality, resemblance, temporal and spatial contiguity, give, he held, this peculiar force or vividness to associated ideas—that is to say, they awaken belief in their reality. The difference between mere conception of an object and belief in it, Hume found, in essence, to consist in the *lively* "*manner*" in which, in belief, we conceive it. Belief is to Hume merely a peculiar feeling or sentiment which accompanies a firm and lively manner of conception: in other words, a firm hold on the object. Belief, he said, had never yet been explained by any philosopher, but his own explanation was far from satisfactory. For



he referred it to mere vividness of idea, or the vivacity of our perceptions, rather than to any apprehension of evidence. The superior hold on the object, in belief, arose, in Hume's view, from a customary conjunction of the object with something present to sense or memory. Hume significantly forgot that imagination is often livelier than memory. He declared belief to be more properly an act of the "sensitive" than of the "cogitative" part of our natures. This reference of belief to the sensitive portion of our nature has its significance in Hume's unfortunate dogma that reason furnishes us with no original idea, but that every idea is the copy of an impression. The psychological straits of Hume were greater than he knew, when consciousness was so reduced to impressions and ideas: sensations cannot take the place of percepts: an image, suggested by a sensation, is a poor guarantee of extramental reality; a lively mode of conceiving or imagining things is not a very satisfying ground on which to rest belief in truth, as truth, and not fiction. Thus belief is, for Hume's psychological atomism, not a sense of reality produced by evidence, but only a more intense and steady conception than what attends mere fictions of the imagination. But we are here

a long way off from those questions, debated to-day, whether such beliefs or judgments of perception are, psychologically viewed, so free from error as has been taken for granted. Our world-knowledge, however, still depends on judgments of perception, and the worlds of fact and of fancy still lie as far apart as in Hume's day. It was in reaction from Hume that Reid took refuge in a theory of perception, which consisted merely in belief, irresistible and immediate, as he supposed. Reid viewed the operation of mind in belief as more simple than his own discussion of belief would, I think, support. Brown blamed Hume, because he had not, on his own ground, accepted simply an intuitive theory of belief. In making belief the governing principle of our actions, the doctrine of Hume carries important implications for practical philosophy also. For do we not know what an indispensable condition of activity belief is, what strength belief sheds through all the tissues of the mind, and what vigour belief pours into the affectional part of our nature? Hume rejected an absolute scepticism, but he did so on grounds of instinct or common-sense rather than of reason. To Kant, belief was subjectively sufficient, but was viewed as objectively insufficient. Kant viewed both

“opinion” and “persuasion” as falling short of “Conviction, whether logical conviction, that is, knowledge; or practical, that is, Belief; because they are not necessary.” Belief and Knowledge were sharply contrasted by Kant, who seemed to think that, if Knowledge were removed or abolished, place would thereby be made for belief. He thinks he has taken away from philosophy the reproach involved in our accepting the existence of things external to ourselves, on grounds of mere belief, but does not seem to realise in what a large tract of transcendental belief he has left us—belief in the constancy of the transcendental object, and of phenomenal substance, belief in the constancy of sense, and of the succession of phenomena.

Fichte’s position as to faith or belief is important for the way in which it anticipates that of James. Belief, or faith, was, for Fichte, the ground of all conviction, because such faith was voluntary acquiescence in some view by which alone we can fulfil our vocation. Faith was imperative, to him, in the search for truth, for the certainty of knowledge was by him grounded in belief or practical faith. This was due to Fichte’s setting obligation—the *Sollen*—before knowledge. Faith or belief in moral law and the moral world-order

was, to Fichte, root and base of all certainties. Knowledge being thus made to rest upon the conscience—in virtue of the law of obligation—or the will, the function of will is thus practically identified with that of intellect. Indeed, the primacy of will, working in obedience to moral law, is asserted by Fichte in the most unequivocal manner. Belief or faith proceeds, in his view, from the character, not from the understanding; we believe because we will to. Belief in moral duty as laid upon us by the One Eternal Will, which is also in *us*; belief in God's reason and truth; such is Fichte's call to us.

The psychology of Fries, on the other hand, was intellectualistic in tendency, as distinguished from empiric associationist. His so-called anthropologic psychology—or empiric psychology—is conceived by him as a genetic description of the life of spirit. He expressly lays it down that all knowledge is an activity of our spirit. All knowledge is, for him, object of interior experience, and, consequently, of anthropologic psychology. But he has no intention to reduce philosophy to empiric study of psychic phenomena, but merely to admonish Kant for his free use of psychologic terms—sense, knowledge, apperception, for examples—without having any proper psycho-

logic theory of cognitive function. It is by his attempt to give anthropologic foundation to philosophy that Fries avoids falling into English empiric psychology, his psychology remaining *Erfahrungsseelenlehre*. We use anthropologic concepts, as Fries calls them, in forming judgments, conceptions, systems, and philosophic concepts, in framing the universal and necessary laws of the essence of things in general. Fries considered judgment to be the knowledge of objects by means of concepts: thus, while the predicate in every judgment is a concept, the subject is an object. For Fries, there are fundamental judgments (*Grundurteile*), which do not admit of proof; and our affirmations are possible only in virtue of our knowledge finding unity in such ultimates. This unitary totality of the immediate knowledge of our reason is transcendental apperception. Thus has Fries transformed and systematised Jacobi's principle of the immediate evidence of faith. Our knowledge is of phenomena: our belief is fixed on the true nature of things: it is feeling or presentation that enables us to bridge these two, and find the true idea in the phenomenon, according to Fries.

Mansel held belief to be our refuge, in the impotence of reason, which enjoins belief in



that which we are unable to comprehend. Sir William Hamilton, in his more exact and careful modes of expression, made, in his logical treatment, a good and rational statement to the effect that the manifestation of belief necessarily involves knowledge, on the ground that we cannot believe without some consciousness or knowledge of the belief, and consequently some consciousness or *knowledge of the object of belief*. Hamilton, however, does nothing to harmonise this with the attitude assumed in his metaphysical treatment, namely, that we must *believe*, but cannot *know*, the Infinite. Hamilton thinks we *believe* axioms or first principles, but *know* the logical deductions from these. Hamilton thus sanctioned the giving of "belief" to that state of mind in which we accept a thing for true, though rational grounds or warrant may be wanting. But the broad philosophic contention of Hamilton is, that belief is the primary condition of reason, rather than reason the ultimate ground of belief. Belief, in his view, always precedes knowledge, a rather self-contradictory position for him. The acute-minded Ferrier held belief to be the determination to accept, for actual, what, on grounds of probable evidence, compelling reason has shewn to be possible, that is to



say, has shewn to be non-contradictory. This was doubtless meant by reason of the fact that the mind, while not in possession of absolute certainty, may yet be impelled, by the necessities of its own rational nature, to affirm the thing to be as it believes. What absence of direct relations there may be to the object, does not keep the mind from affirming its own belief as rational and legitimate. But no principle needs to be here kept more carefully in view than that the real measure of assent is to be found in evidence, and in evidence alone. The training and regulation of the whole mind, in its power to appreciate evidence, is of capital importance.

Among those who have held theories of belief, identical in principle with that of Hume, may be reckoned Brentano, who calls belief judgment, and makes conception and belief two different fundamental psychic phenomena. The concept of belief attained, in Brentano's analysis of judgment, to such fixed and definite meaning as is implied in logical connotation. Judgment, in his psychology, is the attitude assumed by the mind—affirmatively or negatively—towards fact. It is not mere awareness, since the act of judgment implies acceptance or rejection by the subject. In Brentano's psychology,

belief in an object is held to presuppose the thought of it. Nothing is judged, that is to say, believed in or disbelieved, which is not also thought of. When an assenting or a rejecting judgment takes place, then, according to him, the object is twice present in consciousness, both as thought of, and as held for real or denied. His empiric standpoint is seen in his limiting psychology to the mere description and analysis of phenomena given in consciousness.

Bain's treatment of the subject was not very illuminating in some respects. He repelled the broad application of the term belief by James Mill to every species of assurance, and denied the applicability of belief to presentative experiences, rather than representative. James Mill traced all forms of belief to what he called the grand comprehensive law of association, not knowing how little association can be the keyword of belief any more than of knowledge. Bain maintained belief to be a growth or development of will. He subordinated both the feeling and the cognitive factors to the volitional activities—certainly a one-sided stress on a single constituent of belief. Bain took belief to be that in virtue of which we are ready to act, readiness to act being thus of the essence of belief

for him. It is a significant remark of his that belief, in its essential character, is a phase of our active nature—otherwise called the will. The strength of belief he made to depend on conative and emotional impulses. Inasmuch, however, as Bain obviously deals less with the real nature of belief than with its results, he has not advanced the discussion of the problem as much as he might. He has not shewn action to be a condition of belief, but merely that action is an empiric test of belief, on which it depends. But readiness to act is a quite untenable and inadequate criterion or test of belief. His position may yet serve as a reminder of the important practical consideration, that it is a psychological impossibility for a man to do anything noteworthy in action without antecedent belief in the possibility of doing it. Bain's view of doubt as the opposite of belief was clearly a mistaken one. Equally so was his view of belief, which, so far from being based on action, rests upon intellection, and is the basis and spring of action.

Mill did better, his theory of belief as "ultimate" and "primordial" fact—and, as such, unanalysable—contrasting strongly with the action-theory of Bain. The function of judgment, for Mill, implies belief in some-

thing: the act of belief, however, is no concern of logic, which has to do with the things in which we believe: belief and disbelief are spoken of by Mill as two different states that exclude each other. As to the conditions of belief, Mill held that we believe primarily in the sense-given, and, after that, in what is associated with the sense-given. Our belief in the coexistence of things that appear incapable of existing apart seems intuitive, though it is really, in his view, a product of experience. Mill made the mistake of referring belief to memory and expectation, not seeing that they are rather due to belief. His position is marked by lack of insight, since belief has obviously present relations, as well as the past and future ones of memory and expectation. Besides, belief has all-important relations to timeless and necessary truths in the higher regions of the spirit. Like Spencer, he set down our intuitional beliefs or thought-forms to the result of habit, even mathematical axioms being, to him, the result of inveterate associations, so much so that he suggests that their contradictions might have been as axiomatic to us, had only our training been different. But Mill was, no doubt, right in rejecting the associationism of his father, James Mill, and

in taking belief to be a "primordial" and "unanalysable" fact. Only, if we take belief to be simple and ultimate as a state, we must not forget to keep in view the complexity of its relations to knowledge, thought, action, feeling, desire, volition, relations which psychology is far from having fully expiscated. Nor should it be overlooked how permanent and constant are the forces emphasised by associationism in the generating and consolidating of beliefs.

Omitting all discussion of Herbart's exact psychology, with its statics and mechanics of the spirit, we remark that, prior to Mill, had been Beneke, who, in his logical treatment, proved resolute adversary of all apriorism, though his empiric associationism might be less open than that of Mill. Beneke carried out more fully the psychological view of Fries, rejecting more fully than Fries the possibility of speculative knowledge. The merit was his to make early insistence on study of the genetic processes of thought. Psychology was to him, in fact, the fundamental science. Like Lipps, he co-ordinated psychology with natural science. Every judgment is the result of a synthesis of elements, subject and predicate: the problematic is not, for him, a true judgment, because it does not contain any



kind of affirmation: every judgment, conceived as a logical process, is, for him, analytic. The synthesis implied in judgment is, for him, not a product of thought, but a result of experience. Knowledge is built up in us by means of exterior, sensible perceptions, which, by reason of the infinity of their repetitions, assume an interior character. It was the tendency of empiric associationism to resolve thought into such perceptive elements. Complete knowledge is produced only by synthetic harmonies of the real. Beneke bases our beliefs in the universality of truths on inductive processes, it being impossible to think the contrary of a given judgment.

Spencer's treatment of the subject is not a very logical one. Belief is for him inseparable association, the fact not being recognised that association can be no more than cause or condition of belief. It certainly cannot be the central principle, as Spencer makes it, although it may help in confirming and conserving belief. Nothing so mechanical as indissoluble connection can carry us far into the problem of belief. The necessity and importance of belief, however, are recognised on occasion by Spencer, as when, for example, he says the belief in the co-existence of attractive and repulsive forces is one which we are compelled



to entertain. But then, all our *à priori* beliefs are, to him, in their origin, the results of uniform and repeated experience, whereby they have become the automatic elements of thought or the forms of intuition. But the exigencies of this untenable theory call from him the admission that said intuitions are, for the individual, transcendental, but empirical for the race. Such a sensational origin for the higher beliefs of the mind is impossible and unsatisfying. If they only spring from habit, and inveterate association be their sole necessity, then they rest on no basis of external fact or reality. They may be subjective delusions. But Spencer affirms that, all logical objections notwithstanding, we cannot help trusting these intuitions, for we have no higher warrant for believing anything. But this necessity of belief Spencer may not make, for he has dealt violently by our necessary beliefs. Their objective validity is, on Spencer's own principles, nowise guaranteed by the fact that, as he says, we "cannot help trusting" them.

Fechner gave an important treatment to belief in his work entitled 'The Three Motives and Grounds of Belief.' He aims to elevate "the grounds of unbelief into grounds of belief." Belief is thus treated by Fechner

historically, practically, and theoretically, in respect of its determining grounds. As to the first or historic aspect, we believe what has been believed before our time. In the second or practical aspect, we are forced to believe in that which makes for our wellbeing or profit. More difficult is the third or theoretic aspect, in which we seek grounds of belief that shall be valid for reason. Such grounds spring out of our knowledge of our own individual self, to begin with ; we press on, by analogical methods of reasoning, to an all-embracing spirit, in whose life we live. Our faith is a holding for true what we cannot make certain in experience.

Sully's psychology takes a comprehensive view of belief, which he divides into "simple" and "compound" belief (*Illusions*, ch. xi.) It includes its intellectual aspect, in the reference of thought beyond itself to a real object—in, that is to say, its representative character. It embraces also the feeling element by insisting on the need to feel interested in anything in order to being convinced or sure of it. Nor does it exclude a conative element or factor. Vivid and stable concepts are, in Sully's view, believed, because they approximate sense-perception in vividness. Such concepts become representatives of reality, as

objectively existent in the world. He approximates those early thinkers who made rational belief the entrance of reality into consciousness.

M'Cosh, in dealing with what he called the intuitions of the mind, took a more correct view of the relations of belief and knowledge than was done by some others—for example, Calderwood, Turner, and Christlieb, who have held all knowledge to be conditioned by faith. M'Cosh took cognition as his starting-point, and made belief or faith come after. We are not, however, in approving his position as to the relations of faith and knowledge, to be understood as expressing any opinion as to his general position on intuitive perceptions and judgments. Nor would it lie much in the line of our argument to take intuition, with Calderwood, as perception in contrast with judgment. Calderwood took moral laws, as self-evident, to be intuitively known, or directly recognised by reason, while M'Cosh took the mark of our intuitional beliefs to be—not necessity, as with Leibniz, nor necessity and universality, as with Kant, but—self-evidence. But one cannot help asking whether the appeal is not, after all, to universality—to universal reason—for what one may hold self-evident to reason may not so appeal to another.

Volkmann, whose psychology is an elaborate one from the Herbartian standpoint, takes the psychological judgment to fall far short of the logical one, a prejudice being, to him, psychologically "as much a judgment as knowledge." Knowledge, in the logical sense, is, for Volkmann, objective, such knowledge being identical with the "thinking judgment." But he recognises judgments that remain only "probable," or matters of belief.

Baldwin defines belief in the sense of feeling. Distinguishing between simple reality-feeling and belief as assent or confirmation, he yet in both cases makes of belief feeling. The simple reality-feeling is the mere recognition of an object as present to consciousness; the belief, which is a feeling of confirmation, is one which recognises the thing consciously present to be of a kind to satisfy a need. Belief is to him the subjective side of judgment. Belief is to Baldwin, therefore, the consciousness of the personal endorsement of reality. Such reality has its primary criterion in sensations of resistance to our will—a position closely akin to that of Stout, as we shall presently see. Granting the importance of feeling, as now set forth, in connection with belief, we must not be led into any one-sidedness that should obscure the true place of belief among mental

phenomena. The distinctive and essential characteristic of belief is its relation, in its every form, to truth or reality. We cannot allow the cognitive elements in even its early or feeling stages to be obscured. For belief, in the philosophic sense with which we are here concerned, is of the intellect in its judgment functionings. We cannot have the intellect apprehending truth or reality but there is judgment. But this is not to urge an intellectualist theory of the origin of belief, which we take to be, in fact, so central and vital in human nature as to rally round, and focus within, itself, the whole intellectual, volitional, and emotional capabilities of man in a manner that is commanding and unique.

Among those who have suggestively dealt with the problem of knowledge in its psychological relations may be mentioned Ladd, Ormond, Stein, and Hobhouse. Ladd has well set out the full psychic forms and factors involved in the psychological nature of cognition. Ormond treats of judgments of knowledge as coercive, but judgments of belief as "affected with inner contingency" (*Foundations of Knowledge*, p. 309). I do not think it desirable, however, to say, with Ormond—for reasons which have elsewhere in this work been given—that "belief and cognition differ,



not in their essential nature, but rather in their relation to proffered content" (*Op. cit.*, p. 241). On the contrary, it is just such difference in these states of mind that clearness of thinking calls to be emphasised. This is not to say, however, that there is not much that is clear and good in Ormond's discussion.

Stout takes a comprehensive view of belief. Belief is to him, as to James, the mental function of cognising reality. He holds that doubt certainly seems to presuppose belief. To him, doubt and disbelief are forms of belief, since they, too, imply "acknowledgment of objective existence." In cases where belief has no reference to actual practice, the mental attitude, he thinks, must, in believing, be quite distinct from that of practical belief. Real existence exists, for him, essentially in the independence and self-existence of the object in respect of the volitional activity whereby it is cognised. To know is not to create, he says, the object, as such, being independent of our will. A thought of existent reality is for him, at the same time, an affirmation of it, "or no specific thought of a specific object is possible." Our belief in reality is thus conditioned by limitations to our subjective activity. The feeling element, in Stout's view, is prominent in the part



played by obstacles to our volitional activity, such activity including the movements of the body as well as the process of fixing attention. Belief necessarily implies judgment, and judgment is a phenomenon of cognition. Stout has certainly taken a much more correct view of doubt and disbelief than Bain and Mill. Doubt is, in our view, a state in which the element of belief is assuredly present. Doubt can, therefore, never be the opposite of belief. Doubt is belief in lack of evidence for coming to a finding. It is that which makes doubt both intelligible and defensible, under certain circumstances or conditions. For doubt itself presupposes truth and certainty as there to be gained. If it were not so, then scepticism or positive disbelief would be the mind's attitude. Such disbelief is no opposite of belief, psychologically considered, but is, in fact, itself belief. For it is belief of the opposite. If there is to be an opposite to belief, it must lie, it would appear, in sheer lack or absence of belief, which could only be due to that want of reason, good sense, power of judgment, which Descartes, in his so-called apotheosis of doubt, took for granted all men possessed. But the doubt of Descartes was no cowardly, paralysing thing, but doubt which only doubts that it may more certainly

know. Such doubt has learned, with the poet, that—

—“our doubts are traitors,  
And make us lose the good we oft might win,  
By fearing to attempt.”

Lipps occupies a position that reminds us of Baldwin. He holds that judging is an act of consent ; that every judgment asserts reality ; that judgment is conception *plus* the consciousness of reality ; that to have the consciousness of reality means to have the consciousness that an idea is necessary—must, or ought to be ; that an idea is true, if accompanied by the feeling of necessity or constraint, limitation of activity or incontrollableness being his criterion of truth ; that reality-consciousness consists in a feeling of constraint or effort, or in a feeling of resistance aroused in us, when our free ideational process meets with a superideational experience. The problematic judgment is, for Lipps, an assertion of objective validity or reality. But all propositions, he says, are not judgments, for some are positive renunciations of judgment. Lipps holds all knowledge to be objectively valid so far as it necessarily flows from the universality of human nature and its laws of belief. Like James, he claims validity for our moral convictions so far as they arise in this way. He

finds no psychological reason why a moral should give way to an intellectual conviction. But Lipps, it must be said, is prone, in matters of knowledge, to take a psychological rather than a logical view. For him, philosophy is psychology, or the science of inner experience. His pure psychology sets out from the idea that the identification of the unconscious psychic with physiological processes is a metaphysical blending, which psychology must, methodologically, reject. He suggests to one's mind the contrastive procedure of Ribot, who divides psychological theories of feeling into the two classes, intellectualist and physiological, attaching himself, of course, to the latter. Feeling is, in Ribot's view, not merely separable from cognition, but even opposed to it, and the intellectual life is taken to develop only at cost of feeling. But it is absurd to suppose that intellectualism must weaken emotional factors in this way; they are only purified, elevated, enriched. Ribot's psychology postulates for feeling a primacy, which is eventually that of will; for his physiological psychology, feelings are primitive and autonomous, but his exposition of the feeling psychology is lacking in definiteness and consistency.

Dewey differs from those who hold belief to be reality-consciousness or acknowledgment of

truth, in that, to him, beliefs are working hypotheses, and action, which tests and develops belief, re-appears as experimentation, deduction, and demonstration. Belief is to him the kernel and starting-point of all knowledge, knowledge being, for him, the systematisation, development, and testing of beliefs. Dewey, however, holds beliefs to be instigated by reality, and takes them to be themselves real—that is to say, capable of shaping or modifying the reality of other things that are real. But reality does not mean for Dewey something fixed and ready-made. Pure external realities, Dewey does allow, but only “as terms in inquiries.” Such recognition of reality, however, is noteworthy in a pragmatist conception of belief. Knowledge, or the systematisation of belief, presupposes truths already so formed and established as not to be without an effective control over new hypotheses. Dewey’s practical evaluation of thought tries to remain faithful to the interpretation of judgment in terms of function and biological conception, the total activity of judgment being believed to cover the spheres of the ideal and the real. Such a standpoint, he claims, vindicates belief from “the long damnation and longer neglect to which the principle of belief has been subjected” (*The Philosophical Review*, 1906).

Julius Schultz, in treating of the psychology of axioms, combined associationist theory with anticipations of some of the stouter affirmations of pragmatism. Schultz, on the one hand, conceives the axioms as postulates, and, on the other, holds to their working by means of association, which, for him, constitutes the beginning of conscious life. For him the psychological origin of life is found in the association of sensations, time going with such association as its form. Other principles are taken to have their origin in the work of association. Axioms are, for Schultz, really postulates (*Forderungsätze*) or expressions of will. But this is a rather adventurous view of axioms, for which Schultz has not advanced adequate proof, and no reason appears why the usual intellectual view should not be maintained, rather than the suggested volitional one. For our part, we should emphatically object to depart from the intellectual view of axioms as necessary laws of thought, truths that may not be proved, but cannot be doubted. Such axiomatic truths must be admitted with care; but they unquestionably make a goodly number. Such truths form the basis of all reasoning. They issue in certainty, as distinguished from mere rational belief. Schultz inclines to make the axioms postulates,



because they cannot be analytic judgments, else they would be void of practical efficacy: no more can they be synthetic judgments, else they would be conditioned by experience; and he inclines to maintain a continuous transition of mental association to logical thought, in all its spontaneity. His faith in the postulates may well remind us of the positions of Royce and James, as we shall now see.

James has given us an elaborate psychology of belief, "the ultimate of ultimates for our belief" being the sense of our own life which we every moment possess (*Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 297). He declares that the psychologist does not inquire into the possibility of knowledge *überhaupt*, for the reason that he assumes it. The minds he studies are particular minds—objects in a world of objects—definitely located in space and time. "The true opposites of belief, psychologically considered, are doubt and inquiry, not disbelief" (*Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 284). "Belief, the sense of reality, feels like itself—that is about as much as we can say" (*Ibid.*, p. 286). Belief, which conceptually includes reality as its object, is, for him, the function of cognising reality or truth. Belief is, for him, such cognition of reality, in contrast with mere conception.



Belief as reality-feeling is, by him, identified with judgment, for judging, he holds, consists essentially in the affirmation of the reality of an object. Every object is believed in, he says, through the very fact of being conceived. As this would abolish the distinction of reality and unreality, he adds that not all conceived objects are believed in, but only such as remain uncontradicted by the outer world of experience. But what he fails to bring out, or keep to, clearly is, that the reality is there—is not created by belief or cognition. For there can be no such thing as a willed belief as any form of cognition of the external world. A willed belief was, indeed, recognised by Rosmini, but it was as a wrong assent on false grounds. Rosmini even took perception of real beings to be infallible, and set down error to reflection. In passing, it is to be said that James departs from this view of belief, in the religious sphere, where belief becomes a voluntary adopted postulate—a free election or choice. Reality, in that case, becomes only the sum total of what is so chosen or believed, which takes us away, be it said, from James' psychological theory of belief or judgment. Belief, in that case, assumes a logical priority to reality—a subjectivistic enough position. Belief is, to

James, the same psychical attitude as will : they are "two names for one and the same psychological phenomenon" (*Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 321). This he apparently means in reference to the presence of will as essential to our consciousness of belief as really *our* belief, and, in that sense, the statement has, no doubt, its truth. Belief and will may be, psychologically viewed, two aspects of one phenomenon, in that they represent different sides of that active sense of reality which experience has brought us. But, whereas beliefs fall under the objective categories of the true and the false, the appeal of will is to a different set of motives, the good and the bad. Aquinas, however, held intellect to be concerned with the true or false, and took belief to be distinctively an assent, in which will moved intellect. In the reference in question, the will has naturally been supposed to create the belief, as in certain cases it does with James. We have no right to take belief as the same thing as the will to believe. Not even the world of spiritual realities may be regarded or treated as made by our faith or belief. If we claimed the will to believe because our belief carried a practical good with it, we should open the way for wide-throated credulity and superstition. For

James, both will and belief resolve themselves into voluntary attention. But we hold that belief, in the sense of judgment, cognises reality, but does not create it: hence there is really no free or merely willed belief, such as James', which can properly be called cognition. A theoretical decision, and not what James calls a "passional" decision, is our need, and must be sought in a will to know the truth, not in mere action, or willing to believe, as he contends. A *Weltanschauung*, based on his voluntaristic psychology, must tend to subjectivism—if not, indeed, to scepticism—when logically carried out. James, seeking, no doubt, the rationalisation of the world, sets out with co-ordinated will and intellect, but he never overcomes the old dualism between faith and demonstrable knowledge, never harmonises theoretical and practical truth, but reduces intellectual interests to subserviency to free will or the domination of practical effectiveness. It is his complete final identification of cognition with will that is so unsatisfactory. For, as we shall see in the cases of Sigwart and Windelband, the problematic judgment is a true theoretical judgment, and not a decision or result dictated by volition and feeling. In his later writing, James makes much of true and false beliefs,

taking these to be relations among purely mental ideas, and his insistence is that the ideas must agree with realities, be the realities of what sort they may. But the psychology of belief calls us to reject this treatment of ideas, which, *qua* ideas, are neither true nor false, and to keep in view that only psychological *judgment* can determine for us what is true or false in beliefs. Despite his logical inconsistencies, James yet appears to me supreme among psychologists in the splendid vitality that marks his work, which is never lost in petty abstractions.

Paulsen took philosophy to be knowledge, but held that philosophy contains elements of faith so far as it pretends to be a *Weltanschauung* and disclose the meaning of things. Philosophy is not, on his view, product of the intellect merely, but of the personality taken in whole, the will giving it direction, goal, and fire. There must be faith as starting-point of the interpretation of historical life, which is to be philosophy's method; and such faith is to be philosophy's principle of formation. The beliefs which are thus constitutive of philosophy's fundamental principle are faith in the future, in a moral world-order with progress and perfection as characteristics. His only proviso is that the beliefs shall not be contra-

dicted by intellect. But it does not accord well with this fundamental position faith has in philosophy, that he should at other times speak of philosophy as a process of thought on the basis of given facts—empiric actualities given by the special sciences—from which we are to rise to a general synthesis of reality. For why, in that case, after all he has said of faith as the formative principle of philosophy, should reason have, in philosophical or metaphysical inquiry, primacy over faith? Such a world-view Paulsen makes really dependent on man's believing and volitional nature: he speaks of the psychological inevitableness of faith as evidenced in the fact that the will, the essential will, in the end determines belief and world-view. Will and intellect are thus severed: no satisfactory harmonisation is effected between them; he is by no means consistent in making faith supreme in religion, and excluding it, as he does, from metaphysics—his standpoint is not consistently and unvaryingly maintained. Certain resemblances to James' positions here cannot fail to be noted: he suggests what, in respect of psychological theory, James already holds; attention is taken to be stirred only by what is important for us, the apperceptive process being directed by intellect; the importance of things



lies in their being related to our practical ideals or purposes ; hence the important thing for us becomes the real, under the guidance of will. Thought and knowledge are, for Paulsen, in the last result determined by will.

Royce rests, like James, all knowledge on undemonstrable belief, and claims for faith a certainty like that of theoretic knowledge, inasmuch as the latter in the last resort rests on faith. Science itself, for him, rests on postulates, and postulates he takes to be assumptions we voluntarily make, well knowing the risk. The weakness of the position obviously lies in the fact that the postulates of science are not really certainties, for the empiricist may any day have his supposed truths or beliefs corrected or overthrown. The postulates are, admittedly, theoretically uncertain, and no certainty can be claimed for faith in them. The position assumed in this "postulate" theory is obviously anti-intellectualistic in tendency. Royce says the ultimate motive with man in everyday life is "the will to have an external world" (*Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, ch. ix.) To believe is, with him, to "stand in real relation to truth, a relation which transcends wholly my present momentary self" (*The Spirit of*



*Modern Philosophy*, ch. xi.) There is not only a great lack, as just indicated, of logical correctness in the positions of Royce, but also a very uncritical treatment of the nature and relations of belief and knowledge. Bowne and Balfour have also dealt with these scientific postulates. Bowne, in his theistic theorisings, took "the entire structure of scientific theory" to be "a matter of belief." Probability was, for Bowne, not only the guide of life, but of "science and reason itself." Belief must be rational, he held, but may rest on grounds that "do not strictly compel its admission." Balfour, in dealing with the foundations of belief, postulates a rational Deity for scientific demands, and a moral Deity for ethical needs, but thinks we must submit to "an incomplete rationalisation of belief." The danger of these glorifications of belief seems to me to lie in their tendency to give a loosened hold upon reality, to relax the sense of reality as implicated in all the forms and modes of cognition.

Sigwart sharply criticises the uncertain basis for universal truths supplied by Mill's empiricism. Sigwart rules the problematic judgment out of the list of true judgments, for the reason that it carries not the consciousness of objective validity. It represents

a merely subjective attitude, and leads to no judgment of either positive or negative character. Sigwart, however, allows the problematic judgment to be an act of knowledge, because it makes a real statement or assertion, namely, that the particular hypothesis is uncertain. His defect lies, nevertheless, in this connection in a certain disposition to make the problematic judgment an expression simply of subjective uncertainty, rather than an act of knowledge—a judgment making a real assertion. We know, however, how difficult it is to get all the elements of reality brought within such knowledge, as particular. Sigwart regards judgment as a theoretical rather than a practical attitude; truth is for him perfectly independent of our feeling and will; his will for truth contrasts with James' will for believing that there is truth. What agreement seems to exist between Sigwart and James may be said largely to spring from some want of consistency in the former's mode of expressing himself in different places, a fault, of course, in so logical a thinker. Sigwart, however, holds the systematisation of our perceptive thought, and the subordination of all our actions to a single end, to be the merest postulates, leaving our acceptance to rest, in the last result, upon our will. One

finds Sigwart expressly postulating this "primacy of the will" in striking ways (*Logic*, vol. ii. p. 25). One can hardly help recalling here the different attitude of Lotze, who says that "our varying judgments of life have never been able to shake the belief that in its feeling for the values of things, and their relations, our reason possesses as genuine a revelation as, in the principles of logical investigation, it has an indispensable instrument of experience" (*Microcosmus*, vol. i. Bk. II. ch. v.) This possession of feeling by reason, even "in the simplest and apparently driest notions," is striking enough in Lotze. But his are "the inspirations of a reason appreciative of worth." Lotze, however, gives to belief or faith a defective form, when he speaks of it as the feeling which is appreciative of value, without explicit recognition of its intellectual and volitional factors. Feeling of value is certainly not to be confounded with judgment of value. All conviction, however, was made by Lotze to rest upon immediate certainty—a certainty of the universally valid whose origin might be unknown, and whose nature might be intuition or anything you please, but which formed the supreme end of knowledge (*Microcosmus*, vol. i. Bk. V. ch. iv.)

Windelband adopts a widely different point of view from that of Sigwart, his view of judgment being that of a practical attitude. From the species of purely theoretic judgments, he distinguishes that other class of judgments (*Beurtheilungen*) to which universal validity or worth must be attached, since they express no merely natural necessity, but have moral worth or ideal as their determinate end. Belief in such universally valid ends, and in our power to recognise them, is, to him, a presupposition of the critical method. It is this latter class of judgments which, for him, forms the proper object of philosophy, which is therein different from the particular sciences. The problematic judgment is, for him, not only a judgment *überhaupt*, but one to be co-ordinated with judgments both positive and negative. We have here a different conception of the nature of the judgment itself. The essence of judging does not, for Windelband, lie in assertion being made about something, but rather in the assent or dissent in respect of the combination of ideas made. The real judgment is thus, for him, a judgment about a judgment, but this judgment is a practical attitude. It is a feeling of certainty or conviction, varying in degrees of intensity. In

the problematic judgment, the condition of uncertainty is what there finds expression. The problematic judgment he takes to be a real act of knowledge, for the reason that it expresses the fact that reasons for a decision are insufficient. That is to say, the problematic judgment is one which means a suspension of judgment; and it is, for him, a judgment touching the attitude or decision itself, not the validity of the proposition. Judgment is, for him, the mind's attitude to a proposition taken in whole, but with the validity of the proposition, the problematic judgment, he thinks, is not concerned. Windelband, like Sigwart, allows the problematic judgment to be an act of knowledge in that it makes a real statement. But Windelband's tendency to make the problematic judgment a judgment about the validity of a proposition is not very satisfactory, as tending to obscure its being an act of knowledge and a real assertive judgment.

The Italian psychologist, Bonatelli, who had been influenced by Fortlage and Lotze, already had the merit to emphasise certain points that show his anticipatory treatment of the new philosophy of values, such as his reduction of knowledge to the act of judgment, and his view of judgment as an original



and irreducible function of spirit. (See *La Cultura Filosofica*, 1910.)

Wundt's original datum of thought is what he calls the idea-object, which, in fact, contains for him the sum total of possible reality. Psychology has, for him, to do with perceptual knowledge only. He finds that will is the only form of activity of which we have any idea; he makes no substantial difference between sensibility and thought; consequently, the psychical reality of the individual consists, for him, essentially in will. Such will must, of course, be applied to some or other content. Ideas are, for Wundt, the last result to which we come in the analysis of immediate experience. The proof of the necessity of the idea—as his critical realism insists—must not lead us into the further region of necessity of some reality corresponding to said idea. Philosophy, he expressly holds, can prove the necessity of faith or belief, but cannot convert such faith into knowledge.

G. Heymans holds knowledge to have truth for its object—that is to say, the agreement of our representations with reality. Such knowledge implies, for him, non-empirical elements—he emphasises in the theoretic function the presence of an *à priori* element. To him, things are not given in



our perceptions, but only our sensations or states of consciousness. Yet these sensations, presentations, and other contents of consciousness, presuppose, in his view, something external to consciousness—even an external world. He takes the objects of thought or perception, therefore, to exist independently of their existence as contents of our consciousness. The reality which we know is, to him, real, but the relativity of our empirical knowledge means, for Heymans, that the object is other than was believed; and he reduces our knowledge to judgments. Judgment, in his view, always has reference to reality. His position in this respect has been subjected to some criticism by Meinong. All the processes of thought he derives from an ultimate fact—the most universal of all—namely, that there is no *tertium quid* possible to our thought besides affirmation and negation. Like Lipps, however, he leans to psychological, rather than logical view.

Rickert regards philosophy as a quest for truth, in which, to Rickert's transcendental idealism, knowledge must be conceived as independent of the will. True knowledge, says Rickert who has been greatly influenced by Windelband, begins in, and consists of, judgment, which always contains an affir-

mation or a negation, and is not a mere agreement of representations. Judgment is, for Rickert, always an approval or a disapproval, an acceptance or a rejection—that is to say, it is, in the last analysis, the recognition of a value. Rickert objects to fundamental world-views being grounded in the voluntary side of our nature, as by thinkers like James and Paulsen, rather than in theoretical considerations. If will and intellect are taken as distinct, the philosopher must disregard the promptings of will, and give his adhesion to theoretical considerations. Even in the sphere of religious philosophy, care must be taken to preserve the purity of the intellect intact. Transcendental psychology, he says, seeks, by its analysis of knowledge as a psychical process, to reach the transcendent object. This psychology passes from knowledge to the object. The world we must take as meant to realise the ends of knowledge, or, in other words, we must have faith in the objectivity of the moral order or the Good. Judgment is found, on psychological analysis, to have, for its fundamental factors, the feeling of certainty, and the recognition of a transcendent *Sollen* as objects. Only if will can be shewn to be logically prior to intellect, can a voluntaristic

position he held as justified. He therefore tries to ground his voluntarism in the primacy of will in the theoretical sphere. He finds the judging activity to be essentially a volitional process, as an attitude towards alternatives. He does not regard us as free in our judgments to affirm or to deny arbitrarily, but as bound by the feeling of evidence—by a power higher than the individual in making the affirmation or the negation inherent in our judgment. It logically involves, for him, an acknowledgment of truth, and the act of belief, or judgment of truth, is, for him, logically prior to that of reality. For him, as for James, reality is not fixed or given being, with which judgments must correspond. But the choice involved in judgment is not, with him, the arbitrary and indeterminate thing it is for James, for he holds it to be subordinated to, or guided by, the value of truth or sense of obligation. Thus objectivity is conferred on judgments, which are judgments that ought to be. In every judgment Rickert finds the affirmation of an objective worth or value. Every judgment, by its contents, has its foundation in experience, but so far as its transcendental aspect—its *Sollen*, its ideal—is concerned, that cannot be empirically given. Rickert shares the error of the Pragmatists

in reducing the theoretic function to a practical one, in the way he takes for the object of knowledge, not what *is*, but what *ought to be*. Such judgments make reality or the world-order. Truth has such an absolute value as to be the logical presupposition and the constraining power in all acts of judgment, and so in all knowledge. It is thus because they are universally willed, but not as from arbitrary or volitional choices, that the presuppositions of science are, to Rickert, valid. Here he differs from James, whose scientific postulates figure as freely chosen or voluntarily adopted, and without any compelling certainty. Rickert is wrong in making knowledge relate only to the Ideal, and not also to the Real: judgment, in affirming the existence of any part of that Real, is universal in the sense that the reality so asserted is independent of the individual cognitive act.

We have treated the psychology of belief in its more strictly philosophical aspects, but its important specific aspects from the scientific and the religious sides must not be overlooked, as they broaden the view, and well repay study. Clifford and Pearson have dealt with the scientific nature and difficulties of belief, in ways very negative and open to

criticism; these have been more fruitfully dealt with by writers like G. H. Curteis, J. P. Cooke, H. Griffith, A. L. Moore, G. J. Romanes, T. W. Fowle. The psychology of belief, on its specifically religious side, has received attention from Pratt, Starbuck, Coe, and others; on broader lines, from Mallock, Tiele, and others; earlier, from Viscount Amberley, in his analysis of religious belief.

Looking back on our survey of the psychology of belief, we proceed with further discussion of our own. Belief, it will be seen, is best taken, for psychological purposes, not as mere reality-feeling or mere implicit belief, but as the asserting of a reflective judgment or determination.

Not that the state of mere reality-feeling is unimportant, since it yields the materials, so to speak, out of which judgments are formed. But, as a state of undifferentiated feeling, it is inchoate, imperfect, and anterior to those possibilities of doubt from which we are, in judgment, extricated. And ever, in the reaching forth after the satisfaction of life's dim, inarticulate, and most various needs, there breaks forth in us that which is called Belief. That such belief is influenced, nay, often induced by emotions and desires is the clear contention of psychology, to which there is



no such thing as pure reason. It is one of the gains of modern psychology to have so clearly distinguished those two shades or aspects of belief, which we have just spoken of. Belief is the psychological aspect of what, on the logical side, we call judgment. The spheres of such beliefs or judgments are clearly the realms of fact and of truth. For truth is that which *is*, and unto that which *is*, all truth-seeking flesh shall come. Belief it is which makes truth no more vain and ineffective: my feeling is no test of truth, offers of the truth no proof: but, if truth be the highest of realities, my belief in it ought to wake a natural feeling of response—yea, profoundest depths of feeling, appropriate and pure. Truth is the reality of things, consists in the correspondence of all things: truth, like nature, never did betray the heart that loved her: the given truth and the human movement are alike true and needful. In the case of things, belief consists in their appearance of reality: in the case of propositions, belief lies in the appearance of truth which they carry for the mind. Belief is largely conditioned, on the cognitive side, by its harmonisation with the rest of our thought-experience. For our conceptual needs—the needs of ordered system—are no unimportant



factors in this connection. Belief is based on objective truth, which, in its independent reality, we discover, but do not create. But belief is, in its genesis, highly complex in its relatedness, albeit simple in its nature; and the belief, once grounded, affords no guarantee of its own truth, which is a matter for logical or critical reason. This does not keep the mind from holding on its own spontaneous way, for its beliefs are an out-growth of life, rather than of logic. Belief, in the psychological sense with which we are here concerned, attaches itself to the order of things as they are—that is to say, its consent is a compelled consent. This coercive character of belief has not been wanting in recognition since the days of Hume, pertaining, as it does, to the realm of objective fact. But such belief involves voluntary adaptation to the incontrollable. Belief is not something that can be assumed or dispensed with—as Hume very clearly saw and said—at our own will or pleasure. It presents us with realities, or it takes forms in which it appeals to our imagination and our passions, for the grounds of belief are manifold. In the sphere of the physical world, its appeal may not seem great, for our belief in the uniformities of nature and the constancy of the properties of matter has

grown commonplace and matter of course. But the faith involved is none the less real. For, indeed, all science demands such faith—faith in the senses, faith in human reason, faith in human memory, faith in certain principles or postulates which make up what is called the uniformity of nature. Huxley did not hesitate to declare that the ground of all our actions, and the validity of all our reasonings, rest upon what he calls “the great act of faith” which leads us to take past experience as guide of the present and the future. Such is scientific assent or belief. But there are other beliefs—the implications of our nature—where only subjective interests are concerned, and the degrees of probability vary. Faith’s appeal is irresistible in the realm of human life and action, where belief lies at the base of all moral self-determination, ethical character, and high achievements. But belief is, in itself, psychologically considered, a primary psychical experience of quite unique and distinctive character. It belongs to the realm of transcendental reality, where we seek to determine the world as whole, with its end or purpose. This is not, however, to be taken as denying the influence that will exerts on belief, in respect of the

volitional or controlling factor, so often present, affecting the result by means of reasons or motives, in cases where these influences obtain. It is the very function of will to make experience, not simply to register it. Such voluntary control is bound up with our belief, in respect of thought-reality, because only by the aid of said voluntary control can ideal ends be attained. Hence, to modern psychology, belief can only be maintained where there is action on the necessary level. The purity and earnestness or elevation of the whole thought and life must affect it. For belief is fruit of the whole life—product of the many-sided self. It is the flowering of our entire personality—its most notable and characteristic efflorescence. It engages the basal energy of our whole being, and, in its higher forms—as concerned with the Unseen—belief needs to be sustained, in a rational way, by the will to believe. The contention of the late Master of Balliol, in his *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, as to the relation of such belief, or faith to reason, may be here noticed. His contention was, that the opposition so often existent between faith and reason can only be relative—not absolute—and must more and more disappear, as each comes to its own in fully

developed spiritual life. He proposes (vol. i. pp. 18-20) no more new or striking idea than that of evolution—the usual catchword of our time—as an eirenicon in the hope of bringing both terms to better mutual understanding. As to his main contention, enlightened theologians have long been agreed upon it, and do not regard the opposition of faith and reason as more or other than accidental. Dr Caird says there is “no third power beyond both” to determine them, and that is, no doubt, true, although it leaves the matter in somewhat loose and indiscriminate form: there are those who discriminate the *spiritual* reason from the *natural* reason, the dialectic process in the former not being divorced from ethical conditions. The same laws of thought are, no doubt, valid for both, but it is reason, as regenerate and spiritually enlightened, that is held to surmount the oppositions between faith and reason.

As to the proposed eirenicon, I venture to think it not without its disadvantages, and hardly feel prepared to rate it so highly as Dr Caird does. The reconciliation of faith and reason is sought to be effected within the more or less discordant spiritual subject, and the idea of evolution—which, as a result of modern science, is certain to be conceived as

very largely exterior to that subject — will be very apt to make the reconciliation sought too much in what lies beyond ourselves. It must have this exterior effect, for it seeks to adjust our perceptions to the world as antecedent and independent. It seems to me that a truer eirenicon lies much nearer, and is found in the progressive and symmetrical development of the rational *and*—I do not write “or” — spiritual life of the subject. There may, no doubt, be an exterior aspect which the term Evolution covers, but it seems to be undesirably over-weighted in value when the subject’s attention is drawn off so largely to exterior aspects. I am by no means sure that Dr Caird does not unwittingly make the opposition between reason and faith, which he means to heal, at times appear greater than it is. He leaves the impression that faith is mainly a passive and unreflective thing—the “unreflecting faith” of religion, as it is later (vol. i. p. 380) termed—which must “develop into reason,” whose “criticism” is “directed against” it. A deeper psychological and spiritual analysis would show how unsatisfactory such a presentation is. We had thought the day was past when any would treat faith, like Mansel and others, as though it were only unreflec-



tive or receptive, and not also constructive. But perhaps philosophy is lagging at that point. The one and only faint trace of any better view (foot of p. 19, vol. i.) is quite overborne by the whole trend and tendency of the discussion, which does no manner of justice to the rational character of faith in its developed reaches. It is entirely overlooked by Dr Caird that the whole function of reason is not correctly represented when it is set forth as a coming after faith to "criticise" it. Reason must also go *before* faith and justify its confidence, by showing how rational are the grounds of such confidence. Faith is faith—faith believes—just because it is seen to be more rational to believe than not to believe. Faith does not "develop into reason," in any correct psychological speech, but into perfect harmony with reason. It is not only that faith and reason are not absolutely opposed—as Dr Caird rightly contends—but that, though distinct, they are not so separate and independent as he represents. This prior and justifying assent of reason, in faith's most living forms, strangely enters not within Dr Caird's purview. As we have seen faith, in its more developed workings, to be so highly charged with rationality, so it should be seen that reason involves an ultimate element of



faith. If faith is to "develop into reason," we should need to preserve the balance by calling in Pascal's saying that faith is "the last step of reason." For it may, with not less cogency and truth, be shewn that faith is itself the highest reason—reason sublimed—the crown of our intellectual activity. But some find belief or faith at the beginning no less than at the end of reason, for at both extremes are truths and principles so ultimate that reason, it is said, must take them on trust. But it is not really so. The primary perceptions of reason are the really original data, resting on grounds of immediate and indubitable self-evidence. But of reason, in its developed forms, Pascal was surely right when he said that "the highest attainment of Reason is to know that there is an infinity of knowledge beyond its limits." Not less correct was Jeremy Taylor in saying that "Faith ought to be larger than Reason, and take something into her heart that reason can never take into her eye." But all the realm of truth, of which we have been speaking, is to be subordinated, for our trans-subjective intelligence, to interest, according to the pragmatist thinkers of to-day. But if we know anything at all, it is that the truths made known to us by the realities of the universe have an existence quite independ-

ently of man's interest in them. For our belief, truth must remain subordinate to evidence, rather than interest. Not the truth, but only my apprehension of the truth, is dependent on my interest. But the evidence must be higher, the more developed I become. Real belief or vital faith includes, in its nature and working, a synthesis of intellect, with its schematising power, and will, with its fruitful activities. But psychology, as already hinted, has not for its task to determine the validity or objective worth of our beliefs, but only to do with the genesis of the mental state designated belief, or, if any prefer, the genesis of the percept which issues in belief, as it arises out of previous mental experiences. Psychology, in dealing with the genesis of the perceptive state, with its intuition or apprehension of something external and present as object, has no scientific call to determine whether such presentation or belief be valid or illusory. Before it could do so, psychology would have to ascertain whether anything, under the forms of intelligence, had been superimposed upon the elements of sensation, and such an inquiry psychology, as a positive science, must decline. This guarding of psychological analysis as to origin or genesis, from all title to settle questions of validity or falsity, has its im-

portance brought into view when we consider the vast range and enormous power of our intuitive or fundamental beliefs. Some of these intuitive beliefs are open, no doubt, to correction or confirmation by experience and scientific method. Other aspects of belief there are, where it becomes a doctrine of uncertainties, as when, instead of presenting a primary postulate or reality, it is taken as supplementary to knowledge, in the case of some vital or scientific problem. Such uses of belief, as illustrated by Ulrici, Fechner, and others, do not greatly concern us here. But think of the spontaneous and scientifically unproven beliefs on which the whole fabric of the life of intelligence may be said to rest : belief in a world beyond or outside ourselves ; belief in the uniformity of nature ; belief in the unity and externality of the object in the act of perception ; belief in a permanent self, as distinct from particular fugitive feelings ; belief in minds other than our own ; belief in causation ; belief in the superiority of mind to matter ; belief in the persistence of force ; and, I will add, belief in the being of God. These by no means exhaust the list of truths whose validity is often said to spring from a belief of the mind, and they are certainly samples of how nerveless and weak life and action

would be without belief. It seems, in fact, hardly too much to say that the foundations of our psychical life rest upon belief. But what a vast critical function these wide ranges of belief invoke! Thought, by disentangling what is found to be matter of common and permanent cognition, and science, by defining until truth takes shape in the form of universal propositions, exercise an effective control over, and provide valuable regulation of, belief. But, of course, refractory elements remain in the shape of much that is individual, variable, subjective. Still, its variant forms and degrees do not keep belief from being valid for human nature as such. For such belief involves the relatively unchanging reality of the self, with its world relations, and the reality of the present, with its relations to time before and after. Only with the temporal and causal concomitants of such belief is our psychology concerned. If perception involves time, as Wundt and others have insisted, much more does belief, in its complexity: it does not seem as though our conscious and pulsating beliefs could be segregated from time.

The importance of the function of judgment—in respect of the all-inclusive spheres of inner and outer reality—for the psychology

of belief, must have become very apparent from our survey. "Judgment" and "apprehension" are, no doubt, to be distinguished, since we can, and often do, think of things apart from the application of reality to such matters of thought. But this distinction has no relevancy in our contentions, since we are not in the least contemplating any modes of viewing belief, wherein it would fall outside the range of cognitive consciousness altogether. Judgment, so taken, is a primitive and elemental act. It cannot, by its very nature, be defined or expressed. Its acts, as distinguished from its contents, are indistinct and fleeting. The necessity which we feel for taking our own judgments as true is psychological rather than logical. Perfect, from truth's own standpoint, these judgments may never be, but at least validity in varying measure or degree may be claimed for them. The customary thing has been to make such judgment consist of apprehension *plus* belief in the reality of the thing apprehended, but it may be doubted whether the judgment is itself anything more than the real apprehension. It is not easy to conceive apprehension without belief—I mean, recognition, assent, belief, as part of our psychological awareness—but for real or strong belief, in the ethical sphere, an



acting of the will must, of course, supervene. Not in the ethical cases only, but in all cases of belief whatsoever, is the willing function present; for in all conscious belief, it is surely we who believe, and our willing is implicitly present in our cognitive apprehension of belief. A mental process involves an object; I am conscious in the act or event of apprehension; it is the real that is presented to my consciousness, and I have need of nothing more, in order to real belief or true knowledge. Judgment, at its simplest, is just this act of apprehending the real, and need not be thought of as the reaction of the mind upon contents presented to it. There may, however, be mental presentments without issue in actual judgments of a conceptual character. But our beliefs or judgments are not infallible, because the facts of perception are always matters of construction or interpretation, and what is given in feeling or sensation is only imperfectly carried over into our judgments. Belief may be psychologically viewed as a subjective phenomenon, and as conditioned by states of relative mental stability, which are the necessary conditions of belief. But the bridge of objective reality is crossed by our belief being an active sense of that objective world as known by us in



experience. For belief cannot, in the psychological sense in which I have spoken, exist without relation to objective fact or reality.

It is of the nature of belief to be expansive, and not mere fruit of experience; belief is, if we may so speak, the driving power of knowledge, which it tends to outrun; belief is perfectly free, natural, emancipated; is directed by knowledge, which guides belief, uses it, and works out its implications; it is wider, more extensive than knowledge, and is a constructive power or activity. But this does not give me any right to believe in an arbitrary fashion, and without logical justification for my belief. The truth or falsity of my beliefs both constitute logical or epistemological tasks, and do not, as we have indicated, belong to psychology. To say that knowledge, psychologically, does not intrinsically differ from belief, but rather is, in fact, belief raised to its highest power, is, we have maintained, neither correct nor desirable. They are mistaken who base all knowledge on belief; knowledge always carries belief, which founds upon it; belief, properly viewed, neither exists by itself nor for itself, but has reference to truth, and relation to knowledge. It has been declared that there is neither meaning nor justification for belief being opposed to knowledge, but

there is psychological gain in the distinction between the two, at any rate, being observed, their states being so different. Minds like Locke and Leibniz, Boyle and Newton, Cudworth and Edwards, felt the need for faith, just because, like Tennyson, with his flower in the "crannied wall," they sharply felt the limits of human cognition. Such belief is an essential part of our nature, and will always give a normal assent to evidence, wherever the faculty of belief has not become paralysed by habits of doubt. We do not of ourselves create all our beliefs; some of them, such as our belief in the foundations of science, for example, are simply there, ready-made to our hand, so to speak; they are in the mind, almost as assured beliefs, apart from choice or effort of our own. Our belief is just the state or attitude into which our minds instinctively fall, in presence of truth or reality. Hence the conception we form and maintain, in belief, must be held as involuntary. This although thinking is judging. But it would be a serious psychological error to overlook that vast tract of belief, which lies outside the field of attention, and does not admit of that definiteness of setting which makes the beliefs therein contained, verifiable by ratiocinative process. But that which may be unreal or untrue can-

not claim my belief, since it does not afford it rational basis or warrant. For the psychological core of the experience of belief just consists in that recognition or endorsement of presented content, which we call judgment. The belief may pass into knowledge, though knowledge cannot become belief.

The psychological nature of belief has here been our concern, but its possibility and power, we do not, on that account, leave aside as unimportant. It is in keeping with what has been advanced, that belief should be viewed as a fruit of life—by which I do not chiefly mean racial experience—and no mental construction or excogitation. 'Tis an essential of the development of life that it should be marked by the mild persistence of belief, which, in respect of beliefs held from the gains of experience, refuses to surrender or disband these processes of reaction on our environment, save under sufficient changes of stimuli. It appears to have been too much overlooked by psychologising philosophers that the psychology of belief is the psychology of power. For belief is a determinant which pours vigour into the affections, no less than it reinforces will. Belief is the basis of love, with all the emotional efficiency which love brings. But that is not to lead us

into the psychological error of those who resolve belief or faith into a merely emotional experience, instead of relegating it to the sphere of high and confident purposive activity, wherein reasoning, reflective analysis, and actual experiment may all be present. This importance or power pertains to belief in all its reaches or relations, whether it be belief in persons, or in propositions, or in things. Belief or faith, psychologically viewed, corresponds—in the religious no more than in other spheres—with the purposive factor in activity. Everywhere it is prime condition of power, without which man is weak and imbecile. Faith or living belief diffuses a calm and effective energy through the whole man; indeed, it seems to be a psychological law of our mental constitution—one strangely neglected or unperceived by psychologists in general—that, other things being equal, a strong will or strong energy is the direct and proportionate result of strong or living faith. Belief, that is to say, in our own powers or possibilities, where not voluntarily counteracted by other mental efforts, must lead to action and tend to achievement. For, although it is—as I have said—far from fully realised among psychologists, there is no principle of the mind more constantly operative, and more vital in

result, than belief or faith. That is because belief or faith does not stand out so distinctly in our consciousness as some other states. Hume, for all his own doubt, well remarked on the fatuity and sinister effect of a Pyrrhonist condition of mind, pointing out that all human life would thereby perish, and that all action and discourse would cease, and issue in total and destructive lethargy. The truth is, that belief means life.

Belief, in its higher forms, is a movement of our being so central and fundamental, that its issue is life: it influences activity in every sphere of individual being. It is psychology, not rhetoric, which claims for faith, or living belief, every Marathon, every Thermopylæ; which holds every Socrates, every Paul, every Columbus, every Washington, as having been inspired and sustained by faith; and which regards the creative faculty of genius as finding its very life so much in belief, that, without this latter, there were no Homer, no Dante, no Shakespeare, and no Cervantes. If called to suffer or endure, rather than to act, it is still his faith, or living belief, that renders man invulnerable to the shafts of evil and misfortune. Its activity is then spring of heroism, and source of triumph. But our critico-historical

survey does not at all adequately bring out that it does so by its relation to ideals. Ideals are, psychologically, ends of action to be realised by reflection and effort. If we take ideals, in their dynamogenic quality, we may say that there is no ideal without belief or faith. It is just belief or faith that, in its interest, confidence, support, and prehensile force, makes the end a thing to be desired, a thing worthy of patient quest and intelligent effort. Thus belief or faith takes its true place within the circuit of teleological activity, as the grand propulsive power of man's complex nature and activity — one mental life pulsating through all its processes. Man, in the unity of his being, seeks of necessity harmony and consistency in his beliefs. Belief or faith will prove his incentive and support in the most elaborate investigations, to which this craving for consistency may call him.



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The reader, who wishes a bibliography of the subject, will provide himself with a fairly extensive one, if he will take the *combined* Lists of the Articles on "Belief" in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. But if he wishes to make a thorough study of the subject, he will not fail to master the host of monographs dealing with the nature and difficulties of belief from the scientific and the theological sides, as well as those psychological and philosophical works that deal with the narrower technical aspects proper to them. Nor will he neglect study of the relative psychological portions of the works of Augustine, Clement, Origen, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Bacon, Descartes, Arnauld, Malebranche, Hobbes, Spinoza, Pascal, Locke, Berkeley, Leibniz, Hume, Wolff, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Herbart, Krause, Baader, Fries, Jacobi, Reid, Stewart, Brown, Mansel, Hamilton, Ferrier, De Biran, Fechner, Bain, M'Cosh, Mill, Ulrici, Calderwood, Lotze, Brentano, Bonatelli, Spencer, Martineau, Green, Rosmini, Baldwin, Ladd, Ormond, Paulsen, Bowne, James, Royce, Balfour, Dewey, Sigwart, Volkmann, Sully, Stout, Ribot, Windelband, Rickert, Lipps, Wundt, Julius Schultz, G. Heymans, E. Caird, &c.

# INDEX.

---

- Abelard, 2-3  
 Action, 15-16, 18, 29, 52, 65  
 Amberley, Viscount, 48  
 Anselm, 2-3  
 Anthropologic psychology, 11  
 Apperception, 11, 12, 36  
 Apriorism, 18, 20, 43  
 Aquinas, 2-3, 33  
 Arnauld, 2  
 Associationism, 11, 15, 17, 18,  
     19, 20, 30, 31  
 Attention, 34, 36, 63  
 Augustine, psychology of, 1-3  
 Axioms, 17, 30  
  
 Bain, 15-16, 26  
 Baldwin, J. M., 23, 27  
 Balfour, A. J., 38  
 Belief, Descartes', 2  
     " Fichte's, 10-11  
     " Hamilton's, 13  
     " Hume's, 6-8  
     " James', 33-35  
     " Kant's, 9-10  
     " Knowledge and, 2-4, 10-  
     11, 29, 34, 57, 64  
 Belief, Origin of, 5, 10, 24, 48,  
     50  
 Beneke, 18, 19  
 Biology, 29  
 Bonatelli, 42  
 Bowne, 38  
 Boyle, 63  
 Brentano, 14-15  
 Brown, 9  
  
 Caird, E., 52-55  
 Calderwood, 22  
 Causality, 7  
 Certainty, 4, 14, 26, 30, 40, 41,  
     45  
 Cervantes, 66  
 Christlieb, 22  
 Clement, psychology of, 1-3  
 Clifford, W. K., 47  
 Coe, 48  
 Cognition, 4-5, 6-7, 12, 15, 22,  
     24, 26, 28, 31, 32, 34, 38,  
     59, 63  
 Columbus, 66  
 Conation, 16, 21  
 Conscience, 11  
 Consciousness, 8, 13, 15, 22, 23,  
     27, 44, 60, 65  
 Cooke, 48  
 Critical realism, 43  
 Cudworth, 63  
 Curteis, 48  
  
 Dante, 66  
 Descartes, 2-3, 26  
 Desire, 18, 48  
 Dewey, J., 28, 29  
 Doubt, 3, 16, 25, 26, 27, 31, 63  
 Dualism, 34  
  
 Edwards, 63  
 Emotions, the, 16, 24, 48, 64  
 Empiricism, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19,  
     36, 37, 44, 46  
 Empiric psychology, 12, 15

- Epistemology, 62  
 Evolution, 53, 54
- Faith, 1-2, 34, 52, 53, 54  
 Fechner, 20, 58  
 Feeling, 6, 15, 18, 21, 23, 24,  
     25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 39, 40, 45,  
     48, 49, 61  
 Ferrier, 13  
 Fichte, 10-11  
 Fortlage, 42  
 Fowle, T. W., 48  
 Fries, psychology of, 11-12
- Genetic method, 18  
 Gnostic psychologisings, 1-2  
 Griffith, H., 48
- Hamilton, Sir Wm., 6, 13  
 Herbart, 18, 23  
 Heymans, G., 43-44  
 Hobhouse, 24  
 Homer, 66  
 Hume, 6-9, 14, 50, 65  
 Huxley, 51
- Ideals, 47, 66-67  
 Imagination, 7-8, 50  
 Infinite, the, 13  
 Intellect, 11, 16, 21, 24, 30, 33,  
     36, 40, 45, 57  
 Intuitions, 20, 22, 40, 57, 58
- Jacobi, 6, 12  
 James, 25, 27, 31, 32, 33, 34,  
     35, 36, 39, 45, 46, 47  
 Judgment, 7, 12, 14-15, 16, 18-  
     19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 31, 32,  
     34, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46,  
     47, 48, 49, 59, 60-61, 64
- Kant, 9-10, 11, 22  
 Knowledge, 2-4, 10, 11-12, 13,  
     18-19, 23, 27, 29, 31, 35, 37,  
     39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 62, 64
- Ladd, 24  
 Leibniz, 6, 22, 63
- Lipps, 27, 28, 44  
 Locke, 6, 63  
 Logic, 13, 17, 18, 23, 31, 32,  
     38, 40, 44, 46, 47, 50  
 Lotze, 40, 42
- Mallock, 48  
 Mansel, 12, 54  
 Mathematics, 17  
 M'Cosh, 22  
 Meinong, 44  
 Memory, 8, 17, 51  
 Metaphysics, 13, 36  
 Mill, James, 15, 174  
 Mill, J. S., 16-18, 26, 38  
 Moore, A. L., 48
- Newton, 63
- Origen, psychology of, 1-3  
 Ormond, 24
- Pascal, 56  
 Paul, 66  
 Paulsen, 35-37, 45  
 Pearson, K., 47  
 Perception, 8-9, 19, 22, 32, 43,  
     44, 54, 56, 58, 59, 61  
 Personality, 52  
 Phenomena, 12, 14, 15, 24  
 Physiology, 28  
 Pragmatism, 29, 30, 46, 56  
 Pratt, 48  
 Psychology, anthropologic, 11  
     " scientific, 18, 28, 75
- Reason, 1-2, 6, 12, 13, 22, 38,  
     40, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54,  
     55, 56  
 Reid, 9  
 Ribot, 28  
 Rickert, 44-47  
 Romanes, 48  
 Rosmini, 32  
 Royce, 31, 37
- Scepticism, 9, 26, 34  
 Schultz, J., 30

- Science, 37, 38, 41, 47, 51, 53,  
     59, 63  
 Sensation, 8, 20, 23, 30, 44, 57,  
     61  
 Sense, 8, 17  
 Shakespeare, 66  
 Sigwart, 34, 38-41, 42  
 Socrates, 66  
 Spencer, 17, 19, 20  
 Spinoza, 6  
 Starbuck, 48  
 Stein, L., 24  
 Stout, G. F., 23, 25, 26  
 Sully, 21  
  
 Taylor, Jeremy, 56  
 Teleology, 67  
 Tennyson, 63  
 Thought, 18, 37, 43, 49, 53,  
     59  
 Tiele, 48  
 Transcendental idealism, 44, 46  
 Transcendental psychology, 45  
 Truth, 24, 27, 34, 37, 39, 43,  
     44, 47, 49, 50, 57, 63  
 Turner, 22  
  
 Ulrici, 58  
 Understanding, the, 6, 11  
 Universality, 19, 22, 27, 38, 40,  
     41, 44, 47  
  
 Values, 40, 42, 45, 46  
 Volition, 18, 24, 25, 26, 34, 36,  
     40, 46  
 Volkmann, 23  
 Voluntarism, 34, 45, 46  
  
 Washington, 66  
 Will, 11, 15, 16, 23, 28, 33, 34,  
     36, 37, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46,  
     51, 52, 57, 61, 64  
 Windelband, 34, 41-42, 44  
 Wundt, 43, 59



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